

**ANONYMOUS PURCHASES WHILE ALLOWING VERIFIABLE IDENTITIES
FOR REFUNDS RETURNED ALONG THE PATHS TAKEN TO MAKE THE
PURCHASES**

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

5 An electronic commerce system and method has a number of computer systems connected by a network, including a broker computer system having a database of scrips representing a form of currency, a vendor computer system having a database containing products which may be exchanged for the scrips, and a consumer computer system with which a user may initiate transactions to obtain the products contained in the database of the vendor computer system in return for scrip. The broker issues scrip to the consumer having a Customer ID including a Hash subfield containing a value produced by consumer identifying information hashed with a nonce. When the scrip is exchanged for additional scrip, the value in the Hash subfield is hashed with another nonce. The consumer stores the nonces used to produce the Hash subfield in a wallet. If a vendor issuing a refund for scrip wishes to verify the identity of the consumer, the consumer provides the vendor with the identifying information and the chain of nonces used to produce the value of the Hash subfield. The vendor recreates the value of the Hash Subfield to verify the identifying information. Then, the vendor issues a refund coupon having the same Customer ID as the scrip being refunded. The consumer provides the refund coupon to the broker along with the Customer ID of the scrip used to purchase the refunded scrip. Then, the broker issues the consumer new scrip having the provided customer ID.